

EDWARD DUDLEY HUGHES

Light sows a meagre beam
five settings of poems by Osip Mandelshtam

(1997)

commissioned by Jeremy Huw Williams
with funds from the Arts Council of Wales

Preview File Only

Silentium

The breast of the sea heaves peacefully,
Like a lunatic the bright day sparkles,
And the spray is pale lilac
In a bowl of murky blue.

May my lips attain
Their original speechlessness,
A note high and clear,
Unsmirched by being born.

Remain as spray, Aphrodite,
And – word – return to music,
And – fused with life's foundation –
Heart, be ashamed of heart!

(14) 1910

Like the shadow of sudden clouds,
A sea-guest staggers past
And, rippling by, sighs
Along embarrassed shores.

An enormous sail austere soars;
Dead-white, the wave shrinks back –
And once more will not dare
To touch the shore;

And the boat, rustling through the waves . . .

(16) 1910

I grew out of a dangerous swamp,
Rustling like a reed,
And – with rapture, languor, caresses –
Inhale a prohibited life.

In my cold and marshy refuge
No one notices me,
And I'm welcomed by the whisper
Of short autumn minutes.

I enjoy this cruel injury;
And in a life like a dream
Secretly I envy everybody,
Secretly am in love with the world.

(17) 1910

How slowly the horses move,
How dark the light the lanterns throw!
Where they're taking me
These strange ones surely know.

I am cold, I want to sleep.
Confident of their concern,
Suddenly towards starlight
I'm thrown at the turn.

The nodding of a severed head,
The caring icy hand of a stranger,
And – once more unseen by me –
Outlines of dark fir.

(20) 1911

Light sows a meagre beam
Coldly in the sodden forest.
I carry slowly in my heart
The grey bird, sadness.

What shall I do with the wounded bird?
The earth is effaced, silent, dead.
From a belfry masked by mist
Somebody stole the bells.

The high air stands
Dumb and bereaved,
A white and empty tower
Of quietness and mist.

The morning's tenderness – half real,
Half reverie – is never-ending.
Miracle of drowsiness and lull;
Mist-like thoughts are ringing . . .

(21) 1911

I
The breast of the sea heaves peacefully

Poem: Osip Mandelstam
(translated by James Greene)*
Music: E D Hughes

[1] $\text{♪} = 120$

Musical score for section I, measures 1-2. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in bass clef, 2/4 time, with dynamic p . The bottom staff is in treble clef, 2/4 time, with dynamic p . The lyrics "The breast _____ of the sea heaves" are written below the notes. Measure 1 ends with "heaves". Measure 2 begins with "con pedate .".

[3]

Musical score for section I, measures 3-4. The top staff is in bass clef, 3/4 time, with dynamics mp , mf , and f . The bottom staff is in treble clef, 2/4 time, with dynamics p , mp , and $sub f$. The lyrics "peace - ful - ly, Like a lu - na - tic" are written below the notes.

[6]

Musical score for section I, measures 6-7. The top staff is in bass clef, 2/4 time, with dynamics p , mp , $b\beta$, and $b\beta$. The bottom staff is in treble clef, 2/4 time, with dynamics pp , mf , and $b\beta$. The lyrics "the bright day" are written below the notes.

[8]

Musical score for section I, measures 8-9. The top staff is in bass clef, 2/4 time, with dynamic f . The bottom staff is in treble clef, 2/4 time, with dynamics ff , mf , and mp . The lyrics "spar - kles," are written below the notes.

* used by kind permission of Angel Books

10

2/4

p ————— *mf*

And ————— the

6/8

mp ————— *mf*

12

f

p ————— *f*

spray. is pale

14

f ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mp* ————— *f*

li lac In a bowl of mur

17

p ————— *f* ————— *p*

(mur) ky blue.

poco accel

p ————— *fpp* ————— *fff*

20 *poco piu mosso*

May my lips at - tain

poco piu mosso

ffp *ffp* *ffp* *ffp* *ffp*

Rehd. _____ 2ed. _____ Jim

25

Their or - i - gi - nal speech - less - ness.

ffp *ffp* *ffp*

29 *mp*

A note high and

(upper voice sing)

mp

34 *f*

clear, (clear)

f

mp

f

39

44

48

48

Un - smirched by be - ing born.

9:8 9:8 7:6

f mp f

5:4 3 3 3

3 3 3

52

Musical score for piano, page 8, measures 1-4. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in 9/8 time and the bottom staff is in 11/8 time. Measure 1 starts with a fermata over the first measure. Measure 2 begins with a bass note followed by a series of eighth-note chords. Measure 3 shows a transition with a bass note followed by eighth-note chords. Measure 4 concludes with a bass note followed by eighth-note chords. Measure 5 begins with a bass note followed by eighth-note chords.

56

Re - main as

(cluster)

58

word - less spray, Aph - ro - di - te, And—

61

word— re - turn to mu - sic, And— fused with life's

64

foun - da - tion— Heart, be —

68

p *mp* *mf* *f* p

(be) a-shamed of heart!

p *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

72

Musical score for orchestra and choir, page 10, measures 11-12. The score consists of two systems of music. The top system is for the orchestra, featuring two staves: the upper staff uses a treble clef and the lower staff uses a bass clef. The bottom system is for the choir, using a soprano clef. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is common time (indicated by '8'). The vocal line begins with a dynamic of *p*, followed by a melodic line consisting of eighth-note pairs. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with eighth-note chords. The vocal line continues with eighth-note pairs, maintaining the melodic pattern established at the beginning. The piano part remains consistent throughout the measure.

com pedate.

80

A musical score page showing two measures of music for a single instrument. The top staff is in common time and the bottom staff is in 2/4 time. Measure 11 starts with a forte dynamic (F) and consists of six eighth-note chords. Measure 12 begins with a dynamic of 2ed. and continues with six eighth-note chords. The score includes various accidentals such as flats and sharps, and there are grace notes and slurs. A large blue watermark reading "Preview" diagonally across the page.

86

Musical score for piano, measures 1-4:

- Measure 1: pp
- Measure 2: f
- Measure 3: rit. al. fine.
- Measure 4: pp

Performance instructions:
rit. al. fine.
ped.

II
I grew out of a dangerous swamp

Poem: Osip Mandelshtam
 (translated by James Greene)
 Music: E D Hughes

$\text{♩} = 84$

[1] *f*

I grew out of a dang' - rous swamp, Rust-linglike a reed,

[4] *f*

And— with rap - ture, lang - uor, car - es - ses—

[8]

In - hale a pro - hi - bi - ted life.

[11]

In my cold and marsh-y re-fuge No-one no -

14

ti - ces me,
And
I'm
wel - - comed

17

by the whis - - per
Of

20

short au - - tumn min - - ites.

23

I en - - joy this cru - - el in - - ju - - ry;

26

And in a life like a dream Secret - ly

29

I en - vy ev- ery- bo - dy, Secret - ly am

32

in love with the world.

35

III

Light sows a meagre beam

(translated by James Greene)
Poem: Osip Mandelstham
Music: E D Hughes

1 = 92

mp

Light
con pedale.

5

sows a mea - gre beam Cold - ly in the sod - den

9

for - est. I car - ry slow - ly in my

13

heart The grey bird, sad - ness.

17

(wearer)

What shall I do with the

21

woun ded bird? The earth is ef -

54 74 86

mp

25 *mf*

faced, si lent, dead.

mf p ff

29

From a bel - fry

ff

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33

mask - ed by mist Some - bo - dy stole the

36

bells. The high air

40

stands Dumb and be - reaved, A white and emp - ty

45

tower Of quiet - ness and mist.

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49

The morn-ing's ten-der-ness— half real,

53

Half re-ve-rie— is ne-ver-end -

57

ing.

61

Mi - ra - cle of drew si - ness and

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65

hull; Mist - like

f *ff* *f* *mp*

69

thoughts are ring ing...

f

73

p

77

pp

IV
Like the shadow of sudden clouds

Poem: Osip Mandelshtam
 (translated by James Greene)

Music: E D Hughes

[1] $\text{♩} = 56$

[3]

Like the sha - dow of sudden

[6]

clouds. A sea guest

[9]

stag - gers past And rip - pling by sighs a

11 *p*

long em - bar - rassed shores.

14 *mp* *f p* *bd.* *mp* *f*

An e - nor - mous sail Aus - tere - ly soars; Dead

17 *subito* *= 88*

white the wave shrinks back-- And

20 *= 66 (Tempo I)*

once more will not dare To touch the

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23

Still slower tempo

shore.

Rall.

f

sforz.

26

f

mp

p

And the boat, rust - ling through the waves.

Rall.

l.v.

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V
How slowly the horses move

Poem: Osip Mandelshtam
(translated by James Greene)
Music: E D Hughes

1 $\text{♩} = 100$

How

2d.

* 2d.

* 2d.

*

4

2d.

*

How

7

10

2d.

*

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13 *mp*

Where they're ta king me These

mp

Rd.

Rd.

16

strange ones sure ly

Rd.

Rd.

19

know.

f

Rd.

*

22

f

mp

f

Rd.

*

25

I am cold,

I want to sleep.

Confident of their con -

31 f

cern,

34

cern,

37 *f*

Sud - den - ly to - wards star - light

40

I'm thrown at the turn.

43 *p* *b**f* *p* *b**f* *sfp*

The nod - ding of a fe - vered

46 *f* *p*

head, The

mf

sfp

(gve.b.)

Red... - - - - -

49 *f* *ff* *p*

ca - ring i - cy hand of a

grob.
(Pell.)

52

stran - ger, And— once more un - seen by me—

55 *mf* *p*

Out - lines of dark

mp

58 *f* *p*

fir.

molto rall.

ff